country is not really effective;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) whether Government are considering revision of the programme?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MUHI RAM SAIKIA): (a) to (c) The Centrally sponsored scheme of Non-formal Education provides an alternatives channel for elementary education to children in the age group 6—14 years who have never enrolled in primary schools or have dropped out due to various socio-economic constraints. Under the scheme, which started in 1987, State Governments and Voluntary Agencies are given Central grants for running Non-formal Education (NFE) centres in a prescribed ratio. Although the focus of the programme is on the educationally backward States, the scheme also covers urban slums, hilly, tribal and desert areas in other States. The programme is, at present, in operation in 21 States/UTs. Currently about 70 lakh children are enrolled in approximately 2.80 lakh NFE centres. A majority of beneficiaries are girls and members of underprivileged sections of society.

The 8th Plan envisaged that NFE will be developed as a complementary system to the formal elementary education system. It stressed the importance of making necessary investments for qualitative improvement of NFE and the need for greater efficiency in its operationalisation. A provision of Rs. 646.69 crores has been made for the NFE programme in the 8th Plan. Of this, Rs. 541.52 crores has so far been made available to State Governments and voluntary agencies.

Based on past experience gained and the problems faced in its implementation, the scheme was last reviewed in 1993. The following were the major modifications effected in the scheme as a result of the review:

(i) The Central share of grant to State Governments for co-educational centres and administrative support has been increased from 50% to 60%.

(ii) The cost of a NFE project of 100 centres in the first year has been increased from Rs. 5.50 lakhs to Rs. 12.11 lakhs.

(iii) The number of girls centres in a project has been increased from 25% to 40%.

(iv) Remuneration of NFE Instructions and Supervisors has been suitably enhanced.

(v) Investment on teaching-learning materials, training and equipments have been raised.

The revised guidelines also envisages decentralisation of authority, flexibility and efforts for community participation in the management of the programme.

Further improvements in the scheme are contemplated in the 9th Five Year Plan.

Clearance of Railway Projects

858. SHRI VEDPRAKASH P. GOYAL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Committee of Secretaries has banned the Railways from clearing any fresh investment till all its projects in the pipeline are completed;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) the number of projects already in the pipeline and the number of projects whose clearance has been withheld;

(d) whether the Railway Board has been directed to first consult P.M.O. in the matter of granting clearance to new projects;

(e) whether any review of on going projects has been ordered, if so, whether some projects are likely to be shelved; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ): (a) and (b) The Committee of Secretaries has suggested that no new Railway projects should be taken up till some of the ongoing projects get completed so that the shelf of projects remain manageable.

(c) Clearance has not been withheld for any projects till now on this account.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) and (f) Review of projects is an ongoing process in the Ministry of Railways Committee of Secretaries has also mentioned the same. Decision on Railway projects is taken on the urgency of the work, funds constraints, gestation period etc.

Adherence to Montreal Convention on ozone depletion

859. SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) the steps taken by Government so far in observance of the Montreal Convention to prevent ozone depletion and promote eco-friendly technologies in industries and other areas of economy and social life; and

(b) the steps being taken and programmes and campaigns carried on or launched in pursuance of these conventions?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (CAPT. JAI NARAIN PRASAD NISHAD): (a) and (b) To comply with the Montreal Protocol, a Country Programme was prepared after detailed all round consultation for phasing out Ozone Depleting Substances (ODS). Steps have been taken to phase out ODS by funding projects through the Multilateral Fund created under the Montreal Protocol, providing technical assitance, and fiscal incentives to industry. Further the following steps have also been taken:

(i) Awareness Campaigns have been carried out through workshops, film and print media.

(ii) Action has been initiated to formulate rules under Environment Protection Act, 1986.

(iii) Eco-friendly technologies are promoted through implementation of standards for issuance of Ecomark to qualified non-ODS as well as certain selected consumer products.

Illegal construction on the Orissa coast

860.DR. MOHAN BABU:
DR. Y. LAKSHMI PRASAD:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to prosecute companies responsible for illegal construction of Hotels, Gue'st Houses, Hatcheries and Ship Breaking Units on the Orissa Coast;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the punishment given so far for such violations under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS: (CAPT. JAI NARAIN PRASAD NISHAD): (a) to (c) Notices-have been issued to 8 Hotel/Beach Resorts, 3 Hatcheries/Prawn Culture projects, 1 Ship Breaking Unit and 4 Housing/Building construction projects in Orissa, for violation of provisions of Coastal Regulation Zone Notification, 1991 for taking action under Environment (Protection) Act, 1986.

Expansion of Railway Stations in Gujarat

861. SHRIMATI ANANDIBEN JETHABHAI PATEL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of railway stations in Gujarat identified by Government for expansion and development programme during 1995 and 1996;

(b) the progress made in respect of each scheme so far; and

(c) by when the work is likely to be started and completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ): (a) 1995-96 — 29 stations

1996-97— 17 stations

(b) and (c) Works at 29 stations approved during 1995-96 have been started and are progressing as per schedule. Out of the works at 17 stations approved during 1996-97, works have started at 3 stations and works at remaining stations be commenced on completion of requisite formalities. Two to three years will be required for completion of these works.